Recovery Plan for Large-flowered Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia grandiflora*)

Original Approved: September 29, 1997  
Original Prepared by: Region 1, Pacific Region  
[Click here to view document]

RECOVERY PLAN AMENDMENT

We have identified best available information that indicates the need to amend recovery criteria for this species since the recovery plan was completed. In this recovery plan modification, we reference the current criteria and document the criteria amendments, information we considered in drafting criteria amendments, and or other species specific information here about what else may be needed, if applicable. The criteria amendments are shown as an appendix that supplements the recovery plan, superseding only pages 26 and 27 of the recovery plan.

For  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Region 8, Pacific Southwest  
Sacramento, California  

September 2019

METHODOLOGY USED TO COMPLETE THE RECOVERY PLAN AMENDMENT

The original recovery plan did not include delisting criteria because there was insufficient information available to determine biologically sound delisting criteria to ensure the long-term self-maintenance of the species. The revised recovery criteria for the large-flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia grandiflora*) are based on new information, but may still require revision in the future as new information is collected. These criteria follow the five factors used to determine whether any species is an endangered species or a threatened species: the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; the overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or education purposes; disease or predation; the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence. The recovery criteria also address the biodiversity principles of representation, resiliency, and redundancy as defined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Species Status Assessment Framework (Service 2016). Representation describes the ability of a species to adapt to changing environmental conditions over time. It is characterized by the breadth of genetic and environmental diversity within and among populations. Resiliency describes the ability of populations to withstand stochastic disturbance. Resiliency is positively related to population size and growth rate. Further, it might be influenced by connectivity among populations. Generally, populations need abundant individuals within habitat patches of adequate area and quality in order to survive and reproduce in spite of disturbance. Redundancy describes the ability of a species to withstand catastrophic events. Generally, species that have adequate individuals within multiple populations can better withstand potential loss from catastrophic events. Redundancy is high when multiple, resilient populations are
distributed within the species’ ecological settings and across the species’ range. The amended criteria were peer reviewed in accordance with the OMB Peer Review Bulletin following the publication of the Notice of Availability.

Emails were sent to species experts and the Recovery Implementation Team (RIT). While the RIT provided input, the shortened timeline for developing recovery criteria for the large-flowered fiddleneck limited the opportunity for collaboration in this effort. This review was not contracted out.

ADEQUACY OF RECOVERY CRITERIA

Section 4(f)(1)(B)(ii) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) requires that each recovery plan shall incorporate, to the maximum extent practicable, “objective, measurable criteria which, when met, would result in a determination…that the species be removed from the list.” Legal challenges to recovery plans (see Fund for Animals v. Babbitt, 903 F. Supp. 96 (D.D.C. 1995)) and a Government Accountability Audit (GAO 2006) also have affirmed the need to frame recovery criteria in terms of threats assessed under the five delisting factors.

Recovery Criteria
See the previous version of the criteria in the original recovery plan on pages 26 and 27. [Click here to view document]

Synthesis
The large-flowered fiddleneck is an herbaceous annual plant in the borage family (Boraginaceae). This annual species has bright, red-orange, trumpet-shaped flowers arranged in a fiddleneck-shaped inflorescence. Its bright green foliage is covered with coarse, stiff hairs. Historically, the large-flowered fiddleneck ranged from the San Joaquin River Delta in northern Contra Costa County, California, south to Corral Hollow and adjacent areas in San Joaquin County. As a heterostylosous species, the large-flowered fiddleneck produces pin and thrum flower forms (morphs), where the female styles and stigmas have two distinct forms on different plants. Characteristic of the genus, each flower type has four ovaries at the base of the style, each of which matures into a seed. The fruit is known as a nutlet. For a status assessment of the large-flowered fiddleneck, see the 2009 5-year Review (Service 2009).

Abundance
See Table 1 for a list of the populations and their statuses. At the time of listing, there was only one known population, which consisted of fewer than 50 plants. This population was located in southwestern San Joaquin County, California, at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory at the Droptower site at Site 300. In 2017, there were no plants at this site. There are two introduced populations adjacent to the Droptower site with a combined population of 132 plants in 2017 (Carlsen and Paterson 2018). The Draney Canyon site at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory at Site 300 was not visited in 2017 (Carlsen and Paterson 2018). There were 84 plants in the Carnegie Canyon site (formerly called the Etchelet site) in 2017 on Contra Costa Water District property (Carlsen and Paterson 2018), and a combined 2,559 plants at ten introduction sites in three counties in 2017 (Schweitzer, pers. comm. 2018).
Table 1. List of large-flowered fiddleneck populations and their status at the time of listing and their status in 2017. The Introduction site’s names were renamed to Introduction Site #1-10 since the original names are the landowner’s name where they occur. Most of these populations are on private property, and we changed the names to protect the private property owner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Name</th>
<th>Introduced/Natural</th>
<th>Status at time of Listing</th>
<th>Status in 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Droptower</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>Extirpated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Droptower</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Extant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draney Canyon</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Extirpated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Extant</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Extant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction Site #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction Site #10</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Extant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research on Management of Large-flowered Fiddleneck

Research indicates that the large-flowered fiddleneck produces more inflorescences in plots restored to low and medium densities of native perennial grasses compared to plots with low and medium densities of nonnative annual grasses, and that large-flowered fiddleneck produces more inflorescences at lower densities of both grass types compared to higher densities (Carlsen et al. 2000). There have been different ways to achieve this. Pavlik (1990, 1991, 1992, 1995) has examined the effectiveness of various management techniques for the control of nonnative species including hand manipulation, selective herbicides, and fire in the reintroduction of large-flowered fiddleneck to several sites. Grass-selective herbicide treatments were further used as a management tool for controlling nonnative annual grasses at the native Droptower population on the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. After each herbicide treatment, except for the treatment in 1998, large-flowered fiddleneck numbers increased dramatically (Carlsen et al. 2012). The use of herbicide was discontinued due to the large increase of bush lupine at the native Droptower site, and the lack of the response by the large-flowered fiddleneck in 1998 (Carlsen et al. 2012).

One introduced population at Site 300 is a long-term research population established to investigate the effects of fire on large-flowered fiddleneck and the associated plant community. Fire seems to have negative effects on the large-flowered fiddleneck, including increasing the rate of granivory on large-flowered fiddleneck nutlets (Espeland et al. 2005, Paterson et al. 2010, Carlsen et al. 2017). Pavlik (1996) believed that granivores caused the extirpation of the Connolly Ranch population.

All Amsinckia plants are poisonous to grazing animals (Ditomaso et al. 2013; Panter et al. 2017), but the presence of these animals has caused the decline of populations by trampling (Pavlik 1992;
However, cattle seem to avoid large densities of fiddleneck as cattle don’t eat the plant.

Introduction of Large-flowered Fiddleneck

Several attempts have been made to introduce populations of large-flowered fiddleneck. As part of recovery efforts, seven introductions have been established from seed throughout the large-flowered fiddleneck’s historical range (Pavlik 1990, Pavlik et al. 1993). Only two of these populations (at Lougher Ridge on East Bay Regional Park District land, and at Site 300 near the Droptower natural population), appear to have initially been successful. Presently, the Lougher Ridge population is extirpated and the Site 300 population has been maintained through periodic seeding and plantings. In October 2002, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation entered into an Interagency Agreement with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy to provide funding to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory for rapid seed bank enhancement at the Lougher Ridge and Droptower sites (Paterson et al. 2005). Demographic monitoring has been conducted on the various natural and reintroduced sites. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is currently funding introduction efforts in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Joaquin Counties (Vollmar 2016).

AMENDED RECOVERY CRITERIA

Recovery criteria serve as objective, measurable guidelines to assist in determining when an endangered species has recovered to the point that it may be downlisted to threatened, or that the protections afforded by the Act are no longer necessary and the large-flowered fiddleneck may be delisted. Delisting is the removal of a species from the Federal Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (Lists). Downlisting is the reclassification of a species from endangered to threatened. The term “endangered species” means any species (species, sub-species, or distinct population segment) which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. The term “threatened species” means any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Revisions to the Lists, including delisting or downlisting a species, must reflect determinations made in accordance with sections 4(a)(1) and 4(b) of the Act. Section 4(a)(1) requires that the Secretary determine whether a species is an endangered species or threatened species (or not) because of threats to the species. Section 4(b) of the Act requires that the determination be made “solely on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available.” Thus, while recovery plans provide important guidance to the Service, to state agencies, and to other partners on methods of minimizing threats to listed species and measurable objectives against which to measure progress towards recovery, they are guidance and not regulatory documents.

Recovery criteria should help indicate when we would anticipate that an analysis of the species’ status under section 4(a)(1) would result in a determination that the species is no longer an endangered species or threatened species. A decision to revise the status of or remove a species from the Lists, however, is ultimately based on an analysis of the best scientific and commercial data then available, regardless of whether that information differs from the recovery plan, which triggers rulemaking. When changing the status of a species, we first propose the action in the Federal Register to seek public comment and peer review, followed by a final decision announced in the Federal Register.
We provide both downlisting and delisting criteria for the large-flowered fiddleneck, which will supersede those included in the Large-flowered Fiddleneck Recovery Plan, as follows:

**Downlisting Recovery Criteria**
Revisions to the original criteria are shown in italics. The large-flowered fiddleneck may be downlisted to threatened status when:

1. A minimum of six management areas\(^1\) are secured and protected from the threats that caused listing initially, including urbanization, agricultural conversion, competition with invasive vegetation, and livestock overgrazing\(^2\).
2. Sufficient information has been obtained to ensure the perpetuation of suitable habitat\(^3\), and appropriate management, based on this information, is being implemented at each management area\(^1\) in perpetuity\(^4\).
3. Each management area has an average of 3,000 individuals\(^5\) over two precipitation cycles\(^6\) or 10 years, whichever is longer\(^7\), with sufficient acreage of suitable habitat\(^3\) to support an expanded population\(^8\) and provide an appropriate buffer (see task 42).
4. The six management areas\(^1\) concurrently demonstrate self-maintenance without intensive management intervention (e.g. hand-pollination, seed collection, off-site propagation) needed to prevent population decline for two precipitation cycles\(^6\) or 10 years, whichever is longer\(^7\), 9.

**Delisting Recovery Criteria**
All delisting criteria are new. The large-flowered fiddleneck will be considered for delisting when:

**Factor A: Present or Threatened Destruction, Modification, or Curtailment of Habitat or Range**

To delist the large-flowered fiddleneck, threats to the species and its habitat must be reduced. This reduction will be accomplished when the following has occurred:

\[
\text{A/1} \quad \text{A minimum of 12 management areas}^{1} \text{ that encompass sufficient acreage with suitable habitat and maintain ecosystem and evolutionary processes.}
\]

\(^1\) A management area is land consisting of one or more populations of large-flowered fiddleneck and its associated community that is protected adequately to maintain ecosystem and evolutionary processes.

\(^2\) The phrase “including at least two natural populations,” has been removed. Livestock overgrazing is differentiated from grazing as a threat, as the plants seem to need some level of grazing to control its associated plant community and provide more open space for the fiddleneck.

\(^3\) Suitable habitat characteristics include soil quality, slope, and amount of solar radiation; a negligible amount of edge effects; and appropriate levels of grass cover and/or a grazing regime.

\(^4\) The RIT wanted this criterion to be more flexible as more research is being conducted on what the species habitat requirements are.

\(^5\) The largest population size at the Droptower site (1,949 individuals) was not large enough to prevent the collapse of the population (Carlsen et al. 2012). The RIT decided to change this criterion from 1,500 individuals to 3,000, which reflects current introduction efforts.

\(^6\) A precipitation cycle is a series of years that encompass average, above-average, and below-average rainfall conditions, starting and ending with average precipitation. The populations must demonstrate the ability to survive both precipitation extremes.

\(^7\) A time constraint has been added to ensure populations meet the criteria after a certain amount of time should all precipitation cycles last the smallest amount of time.

\(^8\) A population is a group of individuals in a small geographic area.

\(^9\) The phrase “at or above this level,” has been removed.
habitat characteristics and an appropriate buffer area to conduct site specific management actions have been protected in perpetuity. Twelve areas will provide sufficient redundancy for the species to withstand potential catastrophic events.

**Factor B: Overutilization for Commercial, Recreational, Scientific, or Educational Purposes**

The overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes is not known to threaten the large-flowered fiddleneck at this time. Therefore, no recovery criteria have been developed for this factor.

**Factor C: Disease or Predation**

Predation by granivores and the effects associated with grazing (e.g. trampling) are known to threaten the large-flowered fiddleneck. To delist the large-flowered fiddleneck, the threats of predation must be controlled or eliminated. This control will be accomplished when the following has occurred:

C/1 Predation pressure by granivores and herbivores is at a level that does not result in a declining population trend for any of the management areas over four precipitation cycles or 20 years, whichever is longer.

**Factor D: Inadequacy of Existing Regulatory Mechanisms**

The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms is not known to threaten the large-flowered fiddleneck at this time. Therefore, no recovery criteria have been developed for this factor.

**Factor E: Other Natural or Manmade Factors Affecting Its Continued Existence**

Other natural or anthropogenic factors believed to affect the continued existence of the large-flowered fiddleneck: changes in environmental conditions resulting from climate change, altered fire regime, wildfire fuel reduction treatments, natural succession, non-native invasive species, loss of genetic diversity, stochastic (chance) events, and small population size. To delist the large-flowered fiddleneck, these threats must be reduced. This reduction will have been accomplished when the following have occurred:

E/1 Each management area has an average of 16,000 individuals over four precipitation cycles or 20 years, whichever is longer.

E/2 The twelve management areas concurrently demonstrate self-maintenance without intensive management intervention (e.g. hand-pollination, seed collection, off-site

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10 The RIT decided that there shouldn't be a minimum size for each management area due to various land owners and management regimes. Instead, the size of the management areas will be site specific, and will contain suitable habitat characteristics and a land buffer to protect populations from indirect threats. The Service decided that there should be at least 12 management areas, which is double the number of management areas in Downlisting Criteria 1.

11 This criterion will ensure each population has enough time to recover from unpredictable increases in the number of granivores and to develop an adequate seed bank.

12 Traill et al. (2007) recommends using the upper 95% confidence limit from his meta-analysis of minimum viable population (MVP) for species without a known MVP; a value of 15,992 for plants. This number was rounded to 16,000. The RIT agreed that this number is a good target for delisting.
propagation) needed to prevent population decline for four precipitation cycles or 20 years, whichever is longer.13

Rationale for Recovery Criteria

Although our understanding of the threats to and recovery needs of the large-flowered fiddleneck has not changed since the original recovery plan was written, the knowledge base for other aspects of the species ecology has significantly increased. Through the RIT, we have been able to learn more about the potential habitat requirements. However, there are still data gaps that could impede recovery progress, such as the relationship between grazing and the large-flowered fiddleneck, the relationship between fire and the large-flowered fiddleneck, and the relationship between climate change and the large-flowered fiddleneck.

The new delisting criteria ensure mitigation of threats according to Listing Factors A (present or threatened destruction, modification or curtailment of the species habitat or range), C (disease or predation), and E (other natural or manmade factors).

Threats identified under Factor A include habitat loss from the expansion of the San Francisco Bay Area, the change in management regimes, and the conversion of the plant community (Service 1997). Delisting Criteria A/1 addresses Factor A by ensuring 12 management areas are protected with sufficient number of acreage to protect the populations from threats. The management areas will be distributed throughout Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Joaquin Counties where suitable habitat exists. The distribution of the management areas will ensure redundancy and resiliency of the species. Recovery Task 4 and its subsequent tasks are still applicable.

Threats identified under Factor C include the impacts of herbivores and granivores (Service 1997; Service 2009). Delisting Criteria C/1 addresses Factor C by ensuring the average population in each management area is not decreasing over four precipitation cycles, thereby demonstrating resiliency.

Threats identified under Factor E include small populations, stochastic events, and climate change (Service 1997; Service 2009). The updated Downlisting Criteria 3 and Delisting Criterion E/1 will help ensure the species is able to adapt as environmental conditions change. A long-term population viability analysis is needed to determine the actual MVP for this species, as stated under Recovery Task 83. Delisting Criteria E/2 ensures populations are large enough to require little outside help to sustain population levels. As stated in the Recovery Plan, the Service recognizes that limited management, possibly including fencing, periodic burning, and periodic grazing, may continue to be necessary, even following downlisting and delisting, until the species’ habitat is restored on a large-scale (Service 1997). Such management will help ensure the populations are resilient and there is sufficient representation to adapt to environmental changes. These recovery criteria do not address the threat of climate change.

The recovery strategy and the recovery tasks for this species ultimately still reflect the needs of the large-flowered fiddleneck, but they need to be updated in future revisions.

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13 This criterion ensures populations are large enough to survive without intensive management.
LITERATURE CITED


Personal Communications

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF PUBLIC, PARTNER, AND PEER REVIEW COMMENTS RECEIVED

Summary of Public Comments

We published a notice of availability in the Federal Register on June 27, 2019 (84 FR 30760-30764) to announce that the draft Recovery Plan Revision for the Large-flowered Fiddleneck (Amsinckia grandiflora) was available for public review, and to solicit comments by the scientific community, State and Federal agencies, Tribal governments, and other interested parties on the general information base, assumptions, and conclusions presented in the draft revision. An electronic version of the draft amendment was posted on the Service’s Species Profile website (https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/dAPG%20amendment%20Large-flowered%20fiddleneck.pdf). We also developed and implemented an outreach plan that included (1) publishing a news release on our office’s webpage (https://www.fws.gov/sacramento/outreach/2019/06-26/) on June 26, 2019, (2) sending specific notifications to Congressional contacts in Districts 9, 10, 11, 13, and 15, and (3) sending specific notifications to key stakeholders in conservation and recovery efforts. These outreach efforts were conducted in advance of the Federal Register publication to ensure that we provided adequate notification to all potentially interested audiences of the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Recovery Plan Revision for the Large-flowered Fiddleneck (Amsinckia grandiflora).

We did not receive any comments in response to our request.

Summary of Peer and Partner Review Comments

We solicited independent peer review between the draft and final amendments in accordance with the requirements of the Act from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; East Bay Regional Park District; the University of California at Berkeley; and the University of Utah. Criteria used for selecting peer reviewers included their demonstrated expertise and specialized knowledge related to the large-flowered fiddleneck’s biology and the management of the habitat for the large-flowered fiddleneck. The qualifications of the peer reviewers are in the decision file and the administrative record for this recovery plan amendment.

In total, we solicited review and comment from five peer reviewers and eight partner agencies. We received comments from one peer reviewer and one partner reviewer. The peer reviewers that responded included a representative from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The partner reviewer that responded included a representative from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. In general, the draft recovery plan revision was well received by the peer and partner reviewers and garnered positive comments. One reviewer provided additional specific information, including the Report on Rare Plant Monitoring and Restoration at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory’s Experimental Test Site (Site 300) 2015 through 2017 referenced as Carlsen and Paterson (2018); we thank the reviewers for these data and we have added the information where appropriate.

We considered all substantive comments, and to the extent appropriate, we incorporated the applicable information or suggested changes into the final revised recovery plan. Below, we provide a summary of specific comments received from peer and partner reviewers with our responses;
however, we addressed many of the reviewers’ specific critiques and incorporated their suggestions as changes to the final revised recovery plan. Such comments did not warrant an explicit response and, as such, are not addressed here. We appreciate the input from all commenters, which helped us to consider and incorporate the best available scientific and commercial information during development and approval of the final revised recovery plan.

**Peer Review.**

*Peer Review Comment (1):* The reviewer stated that the Abundance section is confusing because it is not clear how the extant populations at the time of listing are related to the extant populations in 2017. They suggested providing a better description of the large-flowered fiddleneck populations mentioned in this paragraph, and adding a table could be helpful to convey this information.

*Response:* We have revised the Abundance section to make the paragraph clearer and have added a table to help convey the information in the section.

**Partner Review.**

*Partner Review Comment (1):* The reviewer stated that the Abundance section estimates population numbers at Site 300 at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory at the time of the personal communication, and that final population numbers have since been published for these populations.

*Response:* We have revised the Abundance section to incorporate the published population numbers for Site 300.
Recovery Plan Amendments for 15 Pacific Southwest Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has identified best available information that indicates the need to amend recovery criteria for the species listed below. Each amendment is recognized as an addendum that supplements the specific portions of the existing recovery plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recovery Plan</th>
<th>Species and Details</th>
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Page(s) Superseded: III-2 through III-37  
| Large-flowered Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia grandiflora*) | Original Recovery Plan Approved: 1997  
Pages superseded: 26-27  
Species Included: *Amsinckia grandiflora* (Large-flowered Fiddleneck) |
Pages Superseded: 43-46  
Species Included: *Callophyrs mossii bayensis* (San Bruno Elfin Butterfly) and *Icaricia icariodes missionensis* (Mission Blue Butterfly) |
| Coastal Plants of the Northern San Francisco Peninsula: Raven’s manzanita (*Arctostaphylos hookeri* ssp. *ravenii*) | Original Recovery Plan Approved: 2003  
Pages superseded: 147-150  
Species Included: *Arctostaphylos hookeri* ssp. *ravenii* (Raven’s manzanita) |
| Serpentine Soil Species of the San Francisco Bay Area | Original Recovery Plan Approved: 1998  
Pages superseded: Section II: p. 14 for San Mateo thornmint, p. 53 for fountain thistle, p. 64 for Presidio clarkia, p. 72 for Pennell’s bird’s-beak, pp. 92-93 for San Mateo woolly sunflower, and p. 128 for Tiburon jewelflower. Also, the overview of recovery criteria for the species (Section III, pp. 10-19).  
Species Included: *Acanthomintha duttonii*, formerly *Acanthomintha obovata* ssp. *duttonii* (San Mateo thornmint)  
*Calochortus tiburonensis* (Tiburon mariposa lily)  
*Cirsium fontinale* var. *fontinale* (fountain thistle)  
*Clarkia franciscana* (Presidio clarkia)  
*Cordylanthus tenuis* ssp. *capillaris* (Pennell’s bird’s-beak)  
*Eriophyllum latilobum* (San Mateo woolly sunflower)  
*Streptanthus niger* (Tiburon jewelflower) |
Draft Recovery Plan for Seven Coastal Plants and the Myrtle’s Silverspot Butterfly: *Chorizanthe valida* (Sonoma Spineflower)

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<td>Section II: pp. 89-90</td>
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<tr>
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Recovery Plan for Seven Coastal Plants and the Myrtle’s Silverspot Butterfly

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<tr>
<td>Species Included:</td>
<td><em>Chorizanthe howellii</em> (Howell’s spineflower)</td>
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For

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pacific Southwest Region
Sacramento, CA

September 2019

Approved: ________________
Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pacific Southwest Region

Date: 9/26/19